



**Travel Industry
Association of Kansas**

**THE VOICE OF THE TRAVEL
INDUSTRY IN KANSAS**

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TIAK TIMES

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WHAT AN EVENT

From Bridgette Jobe, TIAK President



Thank you to everyone who joined us in Topeka for Destination Statehouse. What a great event! We were able to touch over 100 legislators as we shared the economic impact of tourism in Kansas and discussed issues of concern for our industry. Special thanks to Jim Zaleski, Kevin Fern, Jennifer Laird and the entire Advocacy Committee. Congratulations on a job well done!

A big shout out to the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism for providing the travel mugs for each of the legislators. What a great way to reinforce our message of the value of tourism in our state. And, of course, thank you to Visit Topeka for the great after party. I still can't get the picture out of my mind of B.J. Harris and Bubba Gaeddert dancing on the stage.

I especially enjoyed hearing from Mark Beshears, Kansas Department of Revenue, on their agreement with Airbnb to begin paying sales and guest taxes. The impact of short term home rentals is an area we all have an interest in and this is a step in the right direction.

A significant topic of conversation at Destination Statehouse was the recent California ban on state funded travel to four states, of which Kansas is one. We have all seen the recent devastating effects on North Carolina when NCAA events left that state. To proactively attempt to minimize the potential loss of revenue for Kansas, your TIAK Executive Committee met with Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt. We provided a handout describing the possible negative economic impact just in the sports industry. We were pleased that the Attorney General was very well versed on the issue and had already given it some thought. He is reaching out to the other states on the list and is committed to finding an administrative bi-partisan solution. TIAK will continue to monitor and work through legislative means' as opportunities arise.

Don't forget to follow up with your legislators after Destination Statehouse. I encourage you to send a thank you note to those who attended, or a "sorry I missed you" note to those who did not make it this year. Advocacy is a year-round effort. ■

2017 DESTINATION STATEHOUSE (CONT.)

(Continued from page 2)

This event is one that legislators really look forward to for its carnival atmosphere, as evidenced by Senator Francisco (D-Lawrence) riding a bike through the registration area. The day was topped off by a members' only reception hosted by Visit Topeka.

Thanks in large part to event coordinators Jennifer Laird, Jim Zaleski and Kevin Fern, as well as a record number of sponsors, a successful day was had by all with TIAK members personally visiting with more than 100 legislators throughout the day's events. By demonstrating such a tremendous impact for the tourism industry in Kansas, we hope Destination Statehouse is your destination for all things legislative next February as well. ■



2017 DESTINATION STATEHOUSE (CONT.)



2017 DESTINATION STATEHOUSE (CONT.)

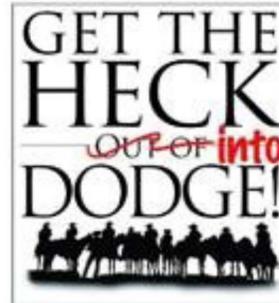


AUDREY KALIVODA

Audrey Kalivoda (right), Cloud County Tourism Co-Director with Susie Haver (left) was killed in a vehicle accident on her way to the Destination Statehouse event. The Kansas tourism community extends its deepest sympathies to Susie and the Cloud County community as they mourn Audrey's loss.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE—TURNAROUND



The Kansas Legislature adjourned yesterday afternoon, officially completing the first half of the 2017 Legislative Session. Turnaround break, however, did not come before some unexpected twists and turns. With the House able to pass Medicaid expansion and override a Governor veto, this week saw the new moderate Republican/Democrat majority in Kansas beginning to take shape.

TAXES

In a news conference Wednesday morning, Governor Sam Brownback officially announced his veto of House **Bill 2178**, the Legislature's tax plan for fiscal years 2018 and 2019. While the House voted 85-40 to override the Governor's veto (84 votes needed), the Senate's vote failed 24-16 (27 votes needed) and killed the bill.

Back to the drawing board, both the Senate and House Tax committees met informally at the rail yesterday to introduce new tax plans. One is the Governor's proposal, which raises cigarette and liquor taxes but keeps LLCs exempt. Another is identical to the vetoed bill without the retroactivity on individual income tax increases, which some believe was the reason many Senators didn't support the override. Other ideas range from removing the top third tax bracket, repealing the non-wage income exemption, and suspending economic development programs such as STAR Bonds, HPIP (High Performance Incentive Program) and PEAK program (Providing Employment Across Kansas). Both Chambers are expected to start running new tax bills after the break.

MEDICAID EXPANSION



After a roller coaster week, Medicaid expansion passed the full House yesterday on a final action vote of 81-44. **House Bill 2044**

expands Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act to over 180,000 uninsured Kansans who are under 65, not pregnant or disabled, and under 133% of the federal poverty level. After Kansas receives \$1.5 billion in federal funds, the program is estimated to cost \$26 million in FY18 and \$57 million in FY19.

After getting tabled in the House Health and Human Services committee on Monday (essentially killing the bill), Minority Leader Jim Ward (D-Wichita) motioned on Tuesday to pull the bill out of committee for a special debate and vote by the full House. However, a germane bill was placed on General Orders Wednesday that became the vehicle for the measure. HB 2044 now heads to the Senate Public Health and Welfare committee for consideration the second-half of the session.

GENDER DISCRIMINATION



Senate Bill 206 was introduced this week and creates the student privacy and protection act. It defines gender as the gender an individual was born with and requires a school to allow single stall bathroom facilities for individuals requesting additional privacy. This bill is an exempt bill and can be acted upon after the turnaround deadline this week.

TRANSPORTATION

On Monday, the House Transportation and Public Safety Budget committee added a proviso directing the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) to bond \$400 million toward T-WORKS reconstruction and maintenance projects in FY18 and FY19.

Currently, KDOT has budgeted \$42 million in FY18 and \$245 million in FY19 for preservation projects. The added funding will help the department reach the average funding of \$350 million per year. Chairman J.R. Claeys (R-Salina) will present the subcommittee's report to the full Appropriations committee on Monday, March 6 for review and approval.

(Continued on page 9)

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (CONT.)

(Continued from page 8)

STAR BONDS

The House Appropriations committee held a hearing on **House Bill 2184** last Friday, extending the sunset of the STAR Bond program five years to July 1, 2022. Sales Tax Revenue (STAR) Bonds provide municipalities the opportunity to issue bonds to finance the development of major commercial, entertainment and tourism areas and use the sales tax revenue generated by the development to pay off the bonds.

Proponents at the hearing included the League of Kansas Municipalities, Unified Government of Wyandotte County, Kansas Department of Commerce, and several cities and chambers of commerce. There were no opponents. The bill is expected to be worked after the break.

ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS



A hearing was held this week in the Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee on a bill to establish permanent entertainment districts in the state. The Senate hearing follows a House hearing on a similar bill. The House Local Government Committee has blessed the bill and assigned it to a sub-committee to look at alcohol liability issues. The House Committee is expected to take action on the bill after turnaround.

BIOSIMILARS

House Bill 2107 passed the full House yesterday on a final action vote of 114-10. The bill amends the Pharmacy Practice Act to allow biological products to be substituted for FDA-approved interchangeable biosimilars in the same way that name-brand pharmaceutical drugs are substituted for generic drugs. HB 2107 will go to the Senate Public Health and Welfare committee for consideration.

An emerging industry, similar legislation has passed 20 other states to date. However, during both committee and floor debate, physician notification remained the controversial issue. Rep. Greg Lakin (R-Wichita), a physician, was unsuccessful in amending the bill to specify notification methods a pharmacy could use in notifying the prescribing physician.

LOOKING AHEAD

Lawmakers will return to Topeka on Monday, March 6 to start the second half of the legislative session and continue tackling the \$1.1 billion budget shortfall through FY19. Since the remaining tax packages on the table all raise less money than the bill vetoed by the Governor, a budget bill that includes cuts appears likely. Legislators are also anxiously awaiting a ruling from the Kansas Supreme Court on school funding adequacy, which may require millions of additional dollars appropriated to K-12 education. ■



LEGISLATIVE AUDIO

Take advantage of the live audio feeds from the Kansas Legislature. To listen to Senate proceedings, click [here](#). To listen to House proceedings, click [here](#). In addition, some committees have live audio feeds, as well, this year. To check on the availability of audio, you'll need to first access the particular committee you're interested in. If audio is available, it will be noted on the committee's page. For a list of Senate committees, click [here](#). For a list of House committees, click [here](#).

U.S. TRAVEL ASSN. STATEMENT ON 9TH CIRCUIT EXECUTIVE ORDER RULING

From [U.S. Travel](#)

U.S. Travel Association President and CEO Roger Dow issued the following statement February 9th in response to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit's ruling against President Trump's executive orders on visa issuance:

"We agree with the court that there are significant interests at stake here. We add to that list of interest the millions of jobs supported by travel across America.

"Over the past weeks, our members have voiced their concerns about how an unintended consequence of this executive order could be a reduction in both international leisure and business travel to the United States. Destinations large and small depend on these visitors to sustain local businesses and jobs.

"That said, we stand with the administration, Congress and law enforcement officials, as we all remain vigilant during an era of constantly changing global security dynamics. As always, we believe in striking a balance that places a premium on both security and our nation's history as a welcoming place for travelers from around the globe." ■



WHITE PAPERS



There's a new addition to the Resources Section of the TIAK website: White Papers.

Our Education Committee has researched and collected white papers on various topics. Current White Paper listings include:

- The State of the American Traveler
- EppersonDest Product Development: A Review and Analysis of the Role of CVBs in Destination Product Development
- Destination Brand Building
- Five Destination Branding Principles to Boost Economic Recovery
- Toll Advocacy: It's Not Just For a Crisis
- Amadeus: Shaping the Future of Travel—Macro trends driving industry growth over the next decade

All of these white papers can be found on the TIAK website at: www.tiak.org/resources/white-papers-reports. Be sure to check them out!

NEW ECONOMIC LIFELINES DIRECTOR



From *Economic Lifelines*

Tara Mays is the new Executive Director of Economic Lifelines. Tara has worked closely with Kansas' transportation entities for the last seven years. She has broad knowledge of policy development with both the Kansas Department of Transportation and the Kansas Turnpike Authority. Tara's work in Kansas government spans more than a decade centered around the development and implementation of the T-WORKS program and the advancement of transportation partnerships. A Topekan who graduated from Washburn University, Tara

began her career in state service in 2004 and has worked on governmental policy development since that time. She has a passion for transportation issues and we look forward to her advocating for long-term policy development that will benefit the users of our state's infrastructure. She will be a great addition for Economic Lifelines and your paths will soon cross with her. ■



National Travel and Tourism Week 2017 takes place this year May 7-13, and is shining the spotlight on the people behind our nation's travel industry with this year's theme: "Faces of Travel." More information can be found [here](#).



**DESTINATION
CAPITOL HILL**

Destination Capitol Hill is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for you to learn about upcoming legislation that impacts travel, network with industry colleagues and meet with Members of Congress to stress the importance of travel as an economic driver.

Join us—and hundreds of your colleagues from around the country March 28-29, 2017. U.S. Travel will provide you with everything needed to go into your meetings with confidence. We'll host educational webinars prior to the event, coordinate your meetings and provide a personalized schedule. If interested in joining the TIAK contingent planning to attend, please contact [Natalie Bright](#). ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
(CLICK ON EACH LINK FOR
MORE INFORMATION):

March 28-29, 2017

Destination: Capitol Hill
Washington, D.C.

April 13, 2017

TIAK Board Meeting
Mulvane, Kan.

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of Kansas

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